

8406.d.44
O R A T O R Y
T R A N S A C T I O N S.

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8406.d.44

1-4.

To be occasionally publish'd,
By J. HENLEY, M. A.

This Contains,

I. A P R E F A C E.

II. A N A R R A T I V E, by Mr. *Welsted*.

III. A D E F E N C E of the O R A T O R Y, against
Objections, in an Academical Discourse, deliver'd
at *Newport-Market*, being One of the Three Hun-
dred Discourses, that were seiz'd and acquitted
by the State.

IV. An I D E A of what is taught in the Week-
Days Academy.

V. The P L A N, and R U L E S of the C O N F E R -
E N C E S and D I S P U T A T I O N S, to which all,
who differ from us are, invited.

VI. An E X P L A N A T I O N of the D E S I G N, in the
First S E R M O N at the Opening of it

Ad Summa,

Inveniam viam, aut faciam.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Y E A R 1728.

ORIGINAL
TRANSLATION

No. 1.

To be occasionally published

BY J. L. E. M. A.

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Opinions, in the

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W. J. L. E. M. A.





THE PREFACE.



I may be thought requisite to introduce the following Sheets with the Ceremony of a PREFACE; to satisfy that Opinion, I would very briefly observe, that the NARRATIVE was compil'd by the Person whose Name it bears; that what is true in it demands no Excuse: That, if any Remark of the Writer appears favourable to my self, and be judg'd Apocryphal, it may, however, weigh in the opposite Scale to some Things less obligingly said of me: False Praise being as pardonable as false Reproach.

IT is not only my Persuasion, but that of Multitudes, far more penetrating than my self, that gross Errors, Impostures and Faults have long prevail'd in the receiv'd Institutions and Establishments of Knowledge and Religion. Numbers of that Opinion require me to discharge my Part towards

asserting the Justness of both, pointing out each Declension from them, and raising them to their natural Perfection.

My Plan many Years ago calculated for this Purpose is not charg'd with any Crime by those, whose Interest, Views, Prepossessions and settled Characters, oblige them to speak, write and act, as if they disown'd it. The more it is known, the more it will be encourag'd and embrac'd; the Truth of Things, and the Happiness of Mankind, apart from narrow partial Aims, being the Centre of it.

If any Errors of Orthography appear in my Advertisements, they are accountable at the Press, a fantastical Machine, which no Writer can command; those of my Grammars formerly publish'd, are due to the same Quarter, and were very much occasion'd by my great Distance then from London. In regard to my future Endeavours, I shall ever aspire to the publick Esteem, and express my Gratitude for the Encouragement I receive by new and stronger Efforts to deserve it.

J. HENLEY.

A



A
NARRATIVE

By Mr. WELSTEDE.

THE Reverend Mr. *John Henley* was born at *Melton Mowbray*, in the County of *Leicester*, *August* the 3d; 1692. His Father is, and his Grandfather, by his Mother's Side, (*John Dowel*, M. A.) was Vicar of that Parish; Mr. *Dowel* was the Author of several Pieces, particularly a Charge of Heresy against Mr. *Hobbs*, the Life of *Julian* the Apostate, and the Lives of *St. Chrysostome* and *St. Basil*. He was remarkable for the Assiduity of his Studies, the Force of his Talents, the Eloquence of his Pen, great Learning, and a peculiar Happiness in Disputation, which he often publickly exerted against the Papists, Dissenters and
B others

others, as Occasion offer'd. The Clergy were then more studious and learned in general than has since been observ'd.

HIS Grandfather, by his Father's Side, *John Henley, M. A.* was likewise a Clergyman, Rector of *Salmonby* and *Thetford* in *Lincolnshire*. He was educated among the Dissenters, in the Time of the civil Wars, and conform'd at the Restoration. He distinguish'd himself by those Qualifications of *extempore* Preaching and Prayer, which then prevail'd, and was very much esteem'd and follow'd.

HIS Father, the Reverend Mr. *Simon Henley* is so well known and approv'd in his Neighbourhood for his Learning and Piety, especially as a very able Textuary, and good Parish-Priest, that it is need less to be more particular on his Character.

Mr. *J. HENLEY* was bred up first in the Free-School of *Melton*, under Mr. *Daffy*, a diligent and expert Grammarian: His Passion for Learning, his Desire of Excelling others, and his unwearied Attachment to Study, shew'd themselves in him very early, and have been the Principles of his Life.

FROM that School he was remov'd to that of *Okeham* in *Rutland*, where, under Mr. *Wright*, eminent for his Command of the *Greek* and *Hebrew* Tongues, he still improv'd; he ow'd much to the Kindness of the Rev. Mr. *Weston*, Usher of that School: There he was led by his Genius to cultivate the Graces of
English

English and *Latin* Poetry; The Earl of *Nottingham*, who has a Seat at *Burleigh*, near that Place, often declar'd his Approbation of his juvenile Performances: It may excite the Emulation of Scholars, to let them know, that there never was Occasion to make use of Severity, or impose any Task upon him; and that his Maxim and Resolution was always to be the First of his Class, and Captain of the School. He likewise made several Exercises in the *Hebrew* Tongue.

HE was hence translated, about the Age of Seventeen to *St. John's College* in *Cambridge*; where, on his Examination by *Dr. Gower*, then Master, *Dr. Lambert*, *Dr. Edmondson* and others, he was particularly approv'd.

HE began here to be uneasy, that the Art of Thinking regularly on all Subjects, and for all Functions, was not the prevailing Instruction: He was impatient, that Systems of all Sorts were put into his Hands, ready carv'd out for him, and that he incurr'd the Danger of losing his Interest, as well as incurring the Scandal of Heterodoxy and ill Principles, if (as his Genius led him) he freely disputed all Propositions, and call'd all Points to Account, in order to satisfy and convince his own Reason: It shock'd him, to find that he was commanded to believe against his Judgment, in Points of Logic, Philosophy and Metaphysics, as well as Religion; and that a Course of the Mathematicks was the least (if any) Part of the usual

academical Education. He was always impatient under these Fetters of the free-born Mind, and privately resolv'd some Time, or other, to enter his Protest against any Persons being bred like a Slave, who is born an *Englishman*.

H E R E he observ'd likewise, that the Space of four Years was employ'd, and what would make a tolerable Fortune consum'd, on the forming such Qualifications as might be master'd to more Perfection in a Fourth Part of the Time.

H E past his Exercises here; and his Examination for the Degree of Batchelor of Arts, with the particular Approbation of Mr. *Field* and Mr. *Smales* (late Chaplain to the Lord *Carteret*) and of the Master of the College; he always thought himself oblig'd to speak of the Rev. Dr. *Newcome* with great Respect, as a very polite, learned and worthy Gentleman, and an Ornament to the College; as likewise, the Rev. Mr. *Baker*, Author of *the Reflections on Learning*, as one of the most accomplish'd Scholars, and one of the best Men of this Age; without Partiality to them, as his well-wishers.

H E likewise found it a great Defect that tho' he was brought up for a Clergyman, he was not instructed to preach, or pray, or read Prayers, or speak, or catechise, or confer, or resolve a Case of Conscience, or understand the Scriptures, or form any natural and clear Idea of the Christian Religion: He determin'd there

A N A R R A T I V E.

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there sometime to lay a Foundation for removing such a Complaint, that Men may be educated for their proper Business, and not be under the greatest Disadvantages in that Station, where they ought to be the most Excellent. This he now professes to do in his present Institution.

AFTER he had commenc'd Batchelor of Arts, he was first desir'd by the Trustees of the School in *Melton* to assist in, and then to take the Direction of that School; which he encreas'd and rais'd from a declining to a flourishing Condition. He establish'd here a Practice of improving Elocution by the publick Speaking of Passages in the Classics, Morning and Afternoon, as well as Orations, &c. This early Turn could not be Theatrical, as some have objected to him, before he had seen a Theatre; he likewise settled a Method of making every Scholar learn and give an Account of his Studies, without the Necessity of consulting others, or of being examin'd by particular Questions.

HERE he was invited by a Letter from the Rev. Mr. *Newcome* to be Candidate for a Fellowship in *St. John's*; but as he had long been absent, and therefore lessen'd his personal Interest, he declin'd appearing for it: Here likewise he began his universal Grammar, and finish'd Ten Languages, with Dissertations prefix'd, as the most ready Introduction to any Tongue whatever. On which Occasion, ha-
ving

ving wrote after out of the Country to the Rev. Mr. Baker in St. John's he receiv'd the following Letter in Answer.

To the Reverend Mr. HENLEY, at Melton
Mowbray, Leicester-Shire.

SIR, Cambridge, Oct. the 10th.

YOU are very right in your Opinion of thinking me willing to assist in any useful Undertaking; but much too favourable in thinking me capable to serve you in your present Design. My Studies for many Years have lain in a much different Way, in History and Antiquities, and that in the obscure and dark Ages, where I meet with little Accuracy in Grammar. If I can be serviceable to you in any Thing, it must be in the northern Languages; and yet I cannot wish you to begin there, or if I should, I doubt I should discourage your Design. I have Dr. Hick's Thesaurus in two large Folios, containing the Grammars of some of the northern Languages, and Dr. Willis's little Grammar for the English, which is look'd upon as a Piece pretty perfect in its Kind. If these, or any other Book I have, would be of Use to you, they should be at your Service, if you can help me to a Conveyance. I presume, you can hardly want Putschius's Collection of the ancient Grammarians, and yet it is a scarce Book, tho' it contains much Dross, as well as Ore. We have it in the Library. Mr. Newcome (who writes to you) must account for Books there, for I pretend to no Interest in

A NARRATIVE. 7

in the College: And since they thought fit to fill up our Fellowships, I wish they had done it whilst you were here, that we might have enjoy'd so useful a Member, and one that would have done Honour to the Society,

I am,

Sir,

Your obliged

Humble Servant,

Tho. Baker.

IN the Beginning of this Interval, he wrote his Poem on *Esther*, which was approv'd by the Town, and well receiv'd: On the Occasion of his Grammars, Dr. *Hutchinson* wrote him the following Letter; (all these being on the Subject of his Writings, it can neither be an Offence, nor an Injury to publish them.)

To Mr. HENLEY junior, at *Melton Mowbray, Leicester-Shire.*

SIR,

Bury, Dec. the 3d, 1719.



write to you unknown, but I am one who, of late, have had my Thoughts upon the same Grammatical Studies that you are engaged in. I have your two Grammars by me, and have ordered

ordered my Bookseller to send me the Rest as they come out ; and as I write this to beg a Civility of you, I shall be ready to return the same Kindness if you think I may have made any Observations that can be of Use to you. The Pains that I am taking is about our English Tongue, and tho' I know not whether any Thing that I have drawn up, will ever pass beyond the Bounds of my Study, and the Perusal of my Acquaintance ; yet my Project, if I meet with Fellow-Labourers to carry it on, is to make two English Grammars ; a short one for Learners, and a longer, with the Rationale of Language mingled with it : And as our Neighbours of France have of late two Dictionaries entirely French, one by their Academy in two, or three large Folios, and another by Furetiere as long : And as Miegé, Lane, Mattaire and Strickland, who have made Grammars for our Tongue, if I guess right, have left their Grammars so imperfect as they are, because we have no Dictionary of our Language to lay all Words regular and irregular, before them with their Derivatives and Changes in Order. I propose at least a short Vocabulary, not of the hard Words as Blunt, and Phillips, and Kersey, but of the Body of our Language as we commonly speak it, with all Derivatives added to their Themes a little after the Manner of Scapula ; and after that a larger Dictionary with the several Senses and Uses of Words, may be made, if the Humor of the Age shall tempt any ingenious Man to undertake it. As I have made a considerable Progress towards the two Grammars
and

and Vocabulary, I have been largest in considering our Alphabet and Spelling, which I take to be much out of Order. We have more Letters than any of our Neighbours, but their Powers are entangled, and the Sounds of our Diphthongs miserably confounded and ill used and hard, tho' I think not impossible to be reduced to a regular Use with their Powers agreeing to their Names. Where that is done, no Rules of Spelling are wanted, whereas Mr. Strickland is forced to put a hundred Rules of Spelling into his Grammar, and many of them such as are almost impossible to be carried in Memory. I am told that the Portuguese write as they speak; and if you have an Alphabet of their Language with the Powers of their Letters described in our English Character, I would be thankful if you would be so kind as to send it me in a Letter. I have read somewhere that the Muscovites have 6, or 7 and Thirty Letters. Perhaps they have different Characters for their long and short Vowels as the Greeks had for e, or o, and as we had once for o, w, or perhaps they have single Characters for their Diphthongs: And two y's a Vowel and Consonant y, as we should have for y in Year and Yoke are as plainly Consonants as v and j are. If you have a Moscovian Alphabet I would be as glad to see that. I suppose it must be a Continuation, or Branch of the old Teutonical, but the Dutch which comes from that, hath no more Letters than ours, and the Islanders when Runolph Jonas wrote his Islandick Grammar in 1651, had not so many. If
C you

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you excuse the Haste in which I have written this, and be so kind as to give it an Answer directed to me at Bury St. Edmund's in Suffolk, you will oblige,

*Your very sincere Friend
and Servant,*

Fran. Hutchinson.

P. S. As you are weighing and comparing antient and foreign Languages, have an Eye upon your own, that is not inferior to any of them, tho' its Spelling is irregular; and when you have gone through your proposed Task, make an Offering to your native Country. It is a Debt we owe it, and great Men have gone before us in the same Way. Ben. Johnson, Milton, Butler, Dr. Wallis. But in this there is plus Operis quam Ostentationis: Great Labour, but little either of Praise, or Profit, and yet I have been told that Jacob Tonson offered Mr Addison Three Thousand Pounds to make an English Dictionary, and put it out under his Name.

HE was ordain'd a Deacon by Dr. Wake, then Bishop of *Lincoln*; and after having taken his Degree of Master of Arts, was admitted to Priest's Orders by Dr. Gibson his Successor in that See: The Examination for Orders was very short and superficial, and by his Account of the Qualifications it is not necessary


cessary to conform to the Christian Religion in Order to the Deaconship, or the Priesthood, but to subscribe (whether you have study'd the Matter, or believe it, or no) to the System of the Church; and the Expence of your Education is lost, if you do not subscribe. But, *if every Man is only oblig'd to subscribe (according to some Doctōrs) in that Sense which he thinks the most consistent with the Scripture*; any Man may subscribe on those Terms; and 'till the Church of England herself declares in what particular Sense any Candidate for Orders shall sign her Decrees, that Sense stands on equal Authority with that of any private Determination. Mr. Henley does not think he has revok'd that Subscription, by taking his present Measures; so far from that, any Man may with a safe Conscience, at any Time make such a Subscription: And this is by him offer'd as one Topic for a publick Disputation.

Mr. HENLEY form'd an early Resolution to improve himself in all the Advantages of Books and Conversation the most effectually, on the first Opportunity, at London. But he laid the Basis of future Proficiency in assisting at the Curacy of his native Town; where he preach'd many occasional Sermons, as well as those in the usual Course of the Pulpit; particularly one, at the Assizes at Leicester, before Mr. B. Dodd and Mr Justice Prat: He then gave a voluntary Warning for the Choice of a new Master and Curate, and came to

Town, recommended by above 30 Letters from the most considerable Men in the Country, both of the Clergy and Laity, but against the Inclination of his Neighbours, and his School, which was now as from his first Entrance upon it, still advancing: And his Method being establish'd and approv'd, one of his own Scholars was appointed to succeed him.

I N Town, he publish'd several Pieces, as a Translation of *Pliny's* Epistles, of several Works of *Abbé Vertot*, of *Montfaucon's Italian Travels* in Folio; and many other Lucubrations: His most generous Patron was the Earl of *Macclesfield*, whom he always found one of the greatest Encouragers of Arts and Learning in this Age, which affords so very few Patrons, or Men of real Genius and fine Taste: His Lordship gave him a Benefice in the County, the Value of which to a Resident would have been above 80 Pounds a Year; he had likewise a Lecture in the City; and preach'd more Charity-Sermons about Town, was more numerously followed, and raised more for the poor Children at those Sermons than any other Preacher, however dignify'd, or distinguish'd: This Popularity, with his enterprizing Spirit, and introducing regular Action into the Pulpit, were the true Causes, why some obstructed his rising in Town, from Envy, Jealousy, and a Dislike of those who are not qualify'd to be compleat Spaniels.

FOR there was no Objection to his being toss'd into a Country-Benefice by the Way of the Sea, as far as *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*; (like a Pendulum, swinging one Way as far as the other.) Two present Convocation-Men, Mr. *Ellis* and Mr. *Barnard*, with Dr. *Pearce* Vicar of *St. Martin's*, sign'd his Credentials. He was employ'd as an Assistant Preacher by Dr. *Burroughs*, now a Bishop, by many who are of the first Rank in the Church, and the late celebrated Lord *Molesworth* presented him with a Scarf, as his Chaplain, with this Form, under his Seal.

 NIVERSIS presentes Literas inspecturis, salutem. Noveritis me Robertum Vicecomitem Molesworth assumere Johannem Henley, Clericum, in numeram Cappellanorum meorum per presentes; quarum vigore liceat eidem J. Henley omnia jura muneri tali concessa obtinere; illaque Universitatibus quibuscunque attestor per presentes dat. Sub manu sigilloque meo ad Arma 24 Die Martij, Anno Domini 1721-2, Annoque Regni Regis Georgii, septimo.

Molesworth.

BUT when he press'd his Desire, and promise from a great Man of being fix'd in Town, it pass'd in the Negative. He took the People too much from their Parish-Churches; and as he was not so proper for a London Divine (in the

the *Speech*, not the *Sentiments* of one who had engaged to place him there,) he was very welcome, notwithstanding all Difficulties, to be a *rural Pastor*.

BUT it was not for a second Rustication, that he left the Fields and the Swains of *Arcadia* to visit the great City: And as he knew it was as lawful to take a Licence from the King and Parliament, at one Place as another, at *Hicks's Hall*, as at *Doctor's Commons* (since the ministerial Powers of this Kingdom are, and ought to be Parliamentary only; another Point which he offers to a publick Disputation,) he freely, without Compulsion, or being desir'd, or capable of being compell'd to reside in the Country, gave up his Benefice and Lecture, Certainties for an Uncertainty, believing the Publick would be a more hospitable Protector of Learning and Science, than some of the upper World in his own Order.

H E R E he has been as much assaulted in Pamphlets and publick Papers, and with Scandal and Aspersions in private Conversation, as if he was prime Minister, and was to answer for all the Sins, both of Church and State.

T H E Truth and Excellency of his Platform (as it lies in the Plan of the ORATORY) have not been contested. Nor its episcopal Authority, since the Bishop, or Archdeacon are oblig'd by Law to register it, and it is, accordingly, so registred; none can deny the Liberty

Liberty of Conscience, which is the Ground of the whole Reformation; nor the Justness of appealing to the most unanimous Consent of the primitive Church; nor the Want of a more compleat Institution in Learning and Theology, than is extant in this Island; for all which this Plan would provide.

BUT that he should have the Assurance to frame a Plan, which no Mortal ever thought of; that he should singly execute what would sprain a Dozen modern Doctors of the Tribe of *Issachar*; that he should have Success against all Opposition; challenge his Adversaries to fair Disputations, without any Offering to dispute with him; write, read and study Twelve Hours a Day, and yet appear as untouch'd by the Yoke, as if he never wore it; compose Three Dissertations each Week, on all Subjects, however uncommon, treated in all Lights and Manners by himself, without Assistance, as some would detract from him; teach in one Year, what Schools and Universities teach in Five; offer to learn ——— to speak and ——— to read; not be terrify'd by Cabals, or Menaces, or Insults, or the grave Nonsense of one, or the frothy Satyr of another; that he should still proceed, and mature this bold Scheme, and put the Ch—— and all that, in Danger;

THIS Man must be a ——— a ——— a ——— a ———
— &c. A Complication of all the Names that were ever furnish'd by the *splendida Bilis*:

He

He can have no one good Disposition, he DOES ALL for Lucre, while some DO NOTHING for it: He *will* endeavour to talk Sense himself, and bring others to that odd Turn, not in the least Reflecting, how we are hurt by it: In short, it is insupportable; and if some Course be not taken, what is founded on a Rock may have the Fate of the Edystone.

SUCH have been the Reasonings, and cool Speculations of many Objectors to Mr. *Henley* and his Plan: But now the Tempest is something more compos'd. It was projected to deliver him to the secular Arm; for that End, * * * *

THE Gaieties of Youth and Conversation are often an Effect of Vivacity and Fire, which is corrected by Years and Experience; St. *Athanasius*, St. *Augustin*, St. *Ambrose*, *Eustathius*, *Luther*, *Calvin*, Numbers of grave Bishops, and weighty Men, have been charg'd with them, but the Sins of the elder Clergy would fill more Volumes than those of the Younger, or than their own good Works; and ecclesiastical Gallantry would be, perhaps, the most copious Topic of ecclesiastical History.

Mr. *HENLEY* has given in his Youth more Demonstrations to the Publick of his Industry and Desire to improve himself and the World (in Proportion to his Years, and Opportunities) than all his *Antagonists* put together.

B Y

By some his Manner of Conducting his ORATORY has been censur'd; but was he to admit all that Concourse indifferently to the Doors of his Pews, which are known to follow him, they who take Seats by the Quarter, or come occasionally, could not enter them: Charity-Sermons are here often preach'd for the Relief of the Poor; and the great Expences in all Incidents, besides the Time and Labour, always employ'd in this most extensive and toilsome Undertaking, all lying upon himself, this Way of supporting it is necessary: The Clergy will demand and prosecute for their Pay, whether they deserve it, or no; his return for his Pains and Endeavours to Merit is precarious, accidental, and at the Mercy of all Mankind; tho' as his Method is free from Compulsion, it is absolutely Primitive. A more strict Attention than is usual is shewn to his Preaching; and the greatest, most polite and learned Persons are frequently present.

His Discourses are clear, full and diversify'd according to his Subject. His Academical and Theological Lectures are a rigorous Enquiry into the Truth of the Question propos'd, to inform and convince; his Sermons and Orations are more Rhetorical and Persuasive; his Speaking is peculiar to himself, and natural. If any object to a Fault, he is desirous to repair it, or to justify himself in a publick Disputation, according to the Rules of Disputing, in any religious Assembly, as well as in the ORATORY. D To

To conclude, he seems as determinate in his Resolution, as he is impartial in his Way of Thinking: He is not to be intimidated, or chill'd, since the World is never steady to itself, and one Vicissitude is compensated by another; he improves daily in all Acquirements of an universal Scholar, as well as in the Approbation of his Hearers, and it is my Opinion that all Persons who fairly and candidly judge for themselves, are in their Minds, Friends to his Plan, whatever they may sometimes express, or act in Relation to the World.

THE Disputations and Conferences of the ORATORY are propos'd on a more rational Foundation, then has been offer'd; the Rules are self-evidently right themselves, and design'd to bring every Point in Question to the Decision of Self-Evidence. But whatever Disputations, or other Performances of the ORATORY may be here after publish'd by any but himself, are spurious, an Imposition on the Publick, and an Injustice to him; he is willing to encourage ingenious and learned Men in these Exercises of Reason, and to make them a prevailing, as well as the most useful Entertainment. And if any Man objects, that he concerts a Dispute, and sees the Arguments of an Opponent, let him bring his Proposition to Mr. *Henley*, fix his Time for a Disputation himself, on a Month's Notice (his other Affairs being numerous, and requiring Time) and try him without letting

letting him see his Arguments: A Detraction of this Kind cannot be otherwise confuted.

H E does not doubt, but ingenious Gentlemen approving this Method, it will answer all their Purposes: And if he rewards any Person for his Disputation, and for his Copy, that Person is oblig'd to him, and so is the World for the Improvement and the Pleasure of Hearing it. Why should not good Sense, Reason, Learning and Politeness be encourag'd, as well as inferior Entertainments? What one Man in *England* professes to have the Spirit of encouraging Literature, but this Gentleman, in the utmost Extent of rational Liberty? And what greater Crime is it to contribute something to animate the Parts and Merit of *Englishmen*, than Millions otherwise?

T H E R E F O R E Mr. *Henley* would put ingenious Men on trying the Good-Nature of the World in this Method: As he is an *Englishman* and a Protestant, he insists on the Right of Offering his Propositions for Disputes and Conferences, and with a *Salvo* and Submission to the Law, he intends to publish some Questions for Disputations: Let his Detractors and Revilers cease to be savagely ignorant, and let them confer like Men and Christians: They confess by declining it, that he is right, and by this Conduct they own themselves where ought to be pointed the Justice of the World.

T H A T the Publick may not arraign him of too interested a Method of proceeding (tho'

the whole Labour and Expence is incessantly his own) he has laid the Plan of a Society, into which, on very easy Propositions, Persons approv'd may advantageously enter : This Design is now on Foot, and the Interest of it is encreasing. I can vouch for the Authentickness of any Particular, in this NARRATIVE ; and as I have here represented Facts only, and what some have requir'd, no Apology is necessary, nothing is overstrain'd in Favour of the Person, or the Undertaking, tho' many Things have been overstrain'd to their Prejudice.

A. Welstede.

A


A Specimen of his Correspondence with foreign *Literati* take in this Letter from the great *Montfaucon*, Printed more at Large at the Head of his Version of his *Italian Travels*.

Eruditissimo clarissimoque Viro

Johanni Henleio

Bernardus Montefalconius

S. P. D.

 U A S, Vir doctissime, accepi Literas, humanitate et observantia plenissimas, quibus te Diarii nostri Italici in Anglicanam hodiernam linguam interpretationem meditari testificaris. Hinc certe in me, immerentem licet, magnum honorem redundare intelligo; quod lucubrationes meae in usum totius Anglicae gentis, studio literarum per totum orbem celeberrimae, transferantur.

CÆTERUM, Vir clarissime, si quid ex luculentis tuis scriptis et operibus mihi transmittere dignatus sis, ut sperare jubes, rem mihi pergratam perque jucundam feceris. Vale, Vir eruditissime, et rem literariam ornare perge. Dabam Lutetia undecimo Kal. Sept. 1723.

P.

P. S. IT being one Point of Detraction from this Undertaking, that Mr. *Henley* borrows from Books, that commends his Judgment as well as his Genius, in studying to improve upon all Authors and Subjects. No Man can think, converse, or write in a learned, correct and elegant Manner without reading, and he entirely answers this Cavil by proposing, that if any Person will single out any celebrated Discourse of an approv'd Writer, Dead, or Living, and will point out what he thinks excellent in it, and the Reasons, he will submit it to the World, whether the most fam'd Compositions may not be surpass'd in their own Excellency, either on that, or any different Subject.





A
 D E F E N C E
 O F T H E
 O R A T O R Y,

In an Academical Discourse, deliver'd at *Newport-Market*, by
Mr. Henley.

2 Cor. 6. 8, 9.

By Honour and Dishonour, by evil Report and good Report, as deceivers and yet true; — as dying and behold we live.



S T. Paul is related, *Acts* 28, to have dwelt two whole Years in his own hir'd House, and to have received all that came in unto him, teaching those Things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all Confidence

dence, no Man forbidding him. This was at *Rome*, and doubtless was his Practice in his other Travels, there being the same Reason in the Thing to produce elsewhere the like Circumstances.

THIS avow'd Method of the great Apostle and Doctor of the *Gentiles*, was plainly in a literal Sense, the Institution of a Christian O R A T O R Y, and tho' he had the particular Inspiration and Assistance of the Holy Ghost, tho' he had the utmost Fortitude, and the greatest Talents, Human and Divine, tho' he had the most unblemish'd Conduct, yet we find him often complaining of the Opposition he met with in the Prosecution of his sacred Purpose.

St. *P A U L* assures us, that Christianity at its first setting out was severely and roughly treated, and chiefly sought to be undermin'd by Calumnies and Reproaches; it was charg'd with Novelty and Impiety: With being a mean, inferior, abject Institution, not only useless and unserviceable, but pernicious to the Publick, and the Cause of prevailing Evils and Calamities: These were common Objections to it, both in the Time of *St. Paul*, and after it. He tells us the Christians were look'd upon as the Refuse of the World; a Gazing-Stock, a Spectacle to Angels and Men; that their Afflictions and Distresses were numberless; that without were Strifes, within were Fears; That they waded thro' Honour and Dishonour,
Perils

Perils in the City, and among false Brethren evil Report, as well as good Report ; as Deceivers, and yet true ; as dying, that is, appearing frequently, by the hard Treatment of their Enemies, under Circumstances of the utmost Disadvantage, almost sinking beneath the Weight of repeated Injuries, and the Pressures of the World ; nearly becoming a Prey and a Triumph, a Subject of Insult and wanton Oppression ; yet says he, behold, we live : We still surmount the Waves of these bold and threatening Disasters ; we are buoy'd up by a Spirit within, and from above, invincible ; our Cause advances ; even our Adversaries multiply our Friends : They that greatly withstand our Words from the Governor *Festus*, and *Diotrephes* who loveth the Pre-eminence, to *Alexander* the Copper-Smith, have not their envious and malicious Aim : We rise above our Fate, we bravely dash away the Surges that would overwhelm us ; thro' that superior Heaven-born Force, that inspires and strengthens us, we can do all Things ; in the midst of Storms we rejoyce, with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory, and are more than Conquerors.

ON this Platform *St. Paul* himself laid the Corner-Stone of the Christian O R A T O R Y. It is no new Thing, it ought to be no Shock, or Surprize, that Difficulties start up, that Reproaches abound ; it was so from the Beginning, and the Christian Faith, like its Au-

thor, was made perfect thro' Sufferings. Crimes of the blackest Sort, as we see in the Apologies of the Fathers, were charg'd on the first Christians; Sacrilege, Incest, promiscuous Mixtures, Murder, eating the Flesh of Infants; these, and other Imputations upon them often occur in the Remains of Antiquity; and a Defence of them on these very Topicks has been lately reviv'd. So that we are not to be damp'd at the Phantasm of a Calumny, but examine its Weight impartially, and poize it in the Ballance of Equity.

WAS it a Consequence that our blessed Saviour was a Blasphemer and seditious, because he was so arraign'd and styl'd? That he was a gluttonous Man and a Wine-bibber, because he was so branded? That *St. Paul* and the Apostles turn'd the World upside down, and perplex'd Religion, because it was so insisted upon by their Enemies? These Questions might be much enlarg'd, and the Justness of a negative Reply to each of them, formidable and horrid as their first Look is, might with great Ease and Clearness be made evident.

AND if the Captain of our Salvation, the Companions and Messengers of our Lord, if *St. Paul*, if the antient Worthies of our Religion have been thus treated; if those, whom we still, not only esteem, but reverence, but follow, but adore; if the Master of the House has been thus try'd, shall be amaz'd and confounded at the like, in those of his Household?

IN General therefore, the Shock is none : The consequent Dismay glides off : Let us now enter into a Detail, and repel the Charge after a View of the Forces.

THE first Point we will consider is that of the Apostolical Constitutions : That there was a Book of that Kind and Title in the primitive Times is beyond dispute ; when the Apostles promulg'd, or dispens'd those Laws, they themselves, in Person, or some undoubtedly then known, and allow'd to be deputed by them, were consequently known and allow'd to have the Right of applying the Rule, and executing the Censure.

BUT what Person is now known, or allow'd to have an Apostolical Warrant ? When any Law is to be put in Practice, in the most common Cases, no Man will submit to its being executed by one, who, he thinks and knows, has no Power to execute it. Be it suppos'd that a Man has broke a Law of this Nation, it is not every Subject, it is not every Person who is to be his Judge, and to punish him. Every Man is not a Law-Officer, or a Magistrate. We first desire to know, or be appriz'd of the Person's Authority, and then we obey, if he has it, that Authority ; but if he pretends an Authority, which he has not, he is punishable himself for assuming it, as well as the Offender of the Law, whom he wou'd chastise for breaking it.

THIS is the Point: When the Laws of Christ and of the Apostles are broken, who but God has the personal Right to judge, or inflict the Penalty? How can Apostolical Statutes be executed without Apostles, or Apostolical Deputies? Where is the Commission, containing a direct Power, lodg'd now in certain Persons to this Effect?

To tell us that there is a Succession of Men from the Apostles, is much the same as to tell us, that there is a Succession of Men from *Adam*, from *David*, or *Solomon*. But how can we know what Powers, or Privileges any of these particular Men have from the Apostles, unless they exhibit their Warrants, or authentick and known Copies of Warrants from *St. Paul*, from *St. Peter* and the Rest? 'Till then every Man has an equal, and none a particular Right to execute these Constitutions, or any Laws of Christ, none but God being Judge of them: There ought to have been an exact Register kept of the expresse Powers given in Ordination by the Apostles to their immediate Deputies, and so on to this Day, to make good a personal Claim of Right from the Apostles. But we have no such Records appearing, and had Almighty God thought this a Matter of so great Importance and Obligation, as some would make it, he would not only have providentially kept to us such a Record, but have afforded us Means to be duly convinc'd of it, since his Commandments are not greivous, and he

he does not intend to bind Impossibilities upon us; as it would be one to oblige us to own a personal Authority, in this Case, without making us able to discover it.

T H E R E are said to be Numbers of Breaks, Uncertainties and Interruptions, in the very History and Chronology of the Succession from the Apostles. That History itself, was it unquestionably clear, is in itself no Commission. A Report of Facts as such, is not a Delegation of Powers: Powers given, ought to be register'd in Specific, distinct, and successive Commissions; that no Man may be mistaken about them, since any Man may pretend to them. But this is wanting, and it is happy for us in this Kingdom that no such Powers can be pleaded, for the Consequence might be the most Tyrannical Bloody Inquisition, under the Mask of executing divine Constitutions.

T H E Apostles were Men inspir'd, and therefore as they had the extraordinary Aid of the good Spirit of God, to submit to their Judgments was to submit to God himself: No Man could be aggriev'd, or complain in obeying their Sentence: But at present, when Men uninspir'd, and frail as ourselves, would exercise their Power, and inflict their Penalties, we have not that Security that we shall be equally us'd; we know not how they will interpret a Law of Christ; or what corrupt Turn they will give to their own Proceedings, from Passion, or Design.

T H I S

THIS would satisfy any such Objection, but I advance farther; admitting the Divinity of the Constitutions, the Imposition of them by a coercive Power has been so far from being allow'd, that the Contrary is the very Principle of our Plan, to propose, to recommend all Things, by Arguments of Reason and Persuasion, not impose them by Force, which in other Terms is call'd Discipline. Force in Religion is repugnant to those Principles, and we are not to submit to it: It is opposite to the Gospel, and Example of Christ and his Apostles, and nothing that tends to it can be a Part of his Laws; it is contrary to the Rights and Liberties of an *Englishman*, which can bear no absolute Authority in these Affairs but that of the just Laws of his Country. It is indeed contrary to the Law of Nature, and the most common and equitable Claims of Humanity.

THE Weight of this Argument is therefore that we propose the Constitutions, (such as are those of the Apostles, that is, such as have the Criterion of their Age, and the collateral Evidence of the first Writers,) we do not impose them: We recommend them by Reason and Persuasion, not by a high Hand, by calling on ecclesiastical Officers, or the secular Arm, to put them in Practice: We are not to endure that Imposition, and we are accountable to God only, either for keeping, or not keeping the Laws of Christ, not to any fellow Christian whatever.

SUPPOSING

SUPPOSING that the Powers now given in Ordination were from the Apostles (which is not granted) yet even supposing that, a right to execute these Laws of Christ, is avowedly no Part of those Powers given in Ordination: For there have been no Ordainers for above 1400 Years in the whole Christian World, who have own'd, exercis'd, or given a Power to put these Laws in Execution; since the three first Ages, before *Constantine*.

BESIDES, they only bind such as have apostolical Baptism and Orders; if apostolical Baptism was by Immersion, and of such only as gave some Account of their Faith; then both that, and Orders must be shewn to be expressly and authentickly deriv'd from their Hands; otherwise no Persons can be oblig'd by these Laws, which were given only to the Faithful; that is, those who had Baptism from the Apostles, and to those who had express authentick Orders from them. And this is a Reason why they cannot now be impos'd, but recommended only, for the Want of proper Subjects to be oblig'd by them: Which are such Persons only as have Baptism and Orders expressly and authentickly deriv'd from the Apostles: So that we are responsible for them to God only, they cannot by Man be forc'd upon us. And where there is no human Obligation to a Law, there can be none to the Penalty.

I ADD that there is no Copy of these Constitutions which has been here entirely receiv'd; we admit only those particular Constitutions as Divine for which we have declar'd, not the Genuineness of any entire Copy of them; and as to the Canons call'd Apostolical we never receiv'd one of them. They may be said to be an Abridgment of the Constitutions, to be equally done by *Clement*, to stand on the same Evidence, and the like, but as we never yet allow'd them to be so, they cannot be reckon'd to us as apostolical Canons.

I DO not mention here how contrary the Imposition of some Copies of these Constitutions is to the King's Supremacy, to the Protestant Succession, Interest and Principles; and to the fundamental Laws of this Kingdom: If they be impos'd, the whole Government must be alter'd, and the Life and Property of every Subject laid at the Mercy of those who impose them: They make the King's Reign and Life precarious; for they make every King a Subject to the Imposers of these Laws, as much as the meanest Person in his Realm: One of them in one Copy, says, That an irreligious Prince, that is, one who will not be of the Religion of these Constitutions, is no King, but a Tyrant: Another makes it Capital to disobey several of these Laws; so that it makes it Capital for all Persons, from the Monarch to the Peasant to break them, all Persons being consider'd

consider'd as equally Subject to these Laws ; we cannot admit these to be Apostolical because they contradict the Mind and Practice of the Apostles, and are destructive, not of this Kingdom only, but of all human Society.

THE Sense of some of them is contended for in a Pamphlet entituled, *St. Clement's and St. Irenaus's Vindication of them* : In these Words, P. 17.

'WE have this Legislation of our Saviour, or his fixing such Rules for the Christian Church, illustrated by the like Legislation and Rules, given from God by *Moses* to the Jewish Church ; with the making *Disobedience to those Rules Capital*, and setting them down in the holy Books for greater Security.

'ALL WHICH *Clement* insists upon, that Christians might not be surpriz'd at the P A R A L L E L C O N S T I T U T I O N S A N D L A W S given them from Christ by his Apostles ; nor wonder if V E R Y G R E A T P U N I S H M E N T S were allotted to those that should be disobedient to them, even under the Christian Dispensation. Of which we have little, or nothing directly in our new Testament, but all of it is entirely and exactly agreeable to the Constitutions.'

THIS cannot refer to future Punishments, for it cannot be said of them, that we have little, or nothing in our new Testament about them ; it refers therefore to *present very great Punishments, parallel to those of Moses, and capi-*

tal exprefsly, on difobeying thefe Laws: This is the Scheme of an Inquifition, and oppofite to the Rights and Liberties of Men, Christians, *Engliſh* and Proteſtants.

W H A T I mean by the apoſtolic Conſtitutions is thoſe Laws which Chriſt gave his Apoſtles, to be promulg'd by them, and freely and voluntarily, without the leaſt Compulſion, or coerceive Power, to be receiv'd by thoſe to whom the Apoſtles preach'd; if any be call'd ſuch, that imply the leaſt Force on Mankind, or appear by the Nature of them to be later than the Time of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, thoſe I do not believe Apoſtolic, and thoſe which I do receive as ſuch, I entertain freely and will not ſuffer the Impoſition of them, in any Reſpect, or Degree, whatever; for I own no Judge in Spirituals, but God only, and thoſe who are ſet over me, by lawful Authority, to adminiſter and execute by my own free Conſent the juſt Laws of my Country.

A N O T H E R Objection is a Quære, how a Lay-Man can officiate in ſacred Things, or ſupply the Function of a Clergy-Man in the Chriſtian Church.

T H I S Quære was founded on a Note in the Rubricks of our Appeal, in which it is ſaid, that in the Want of a certain apoſtolic Miſſion, the officiating Miniſter might perform the Function.

A N D I cannot better anſwer the Quære itſelf, than in the expreſs Words of the Articles of the Church of *England*.

T H E

THE 23d Article of ministr'ing in the Congregation runs thus ; 'It is not lawful for any Man to take upon him the Office of publick Preaching, or Ministr'ing the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully call'd and sent to execute the same ; and those we ought to judge lawfully call'd and sent, which be chosen and call'd to this Work by Men, who have publick Authority given unto them in the Congregation to call and send Labourers into the Lord's Vineyard.'

HERE , you see literally, that all are Ministers lawfully call'd and sent, who are publicly authoriz'd in the Congregation : Whether they have a certain apostolical Mission, or no : Publick Authority is all that the Church of *England* makes necessary, and we agree to this Article in our Rubrick. I have the same publick Authority with others, having been episcopally ordain'd, (as the Style is,) and likewise particularly authoriz'd by the State, and the civil Laws of this Kingdom.

So that the Quære is ill put, how a Lay-Man can officiate, for according to the Article above, in Terms, he that is publicly authoriz'd is no Lay-Man, but a lawful Minister ; and he only is a Lay-Man, who has not that publick Authority.

THE Rubrick aforesaid was level'd against the unjust and tyrannical Pretensions of some Men, over the Consciences and Liberties of others, grounded on the Claim of an apostolical

lical Mission. Whereas that is not thought necessary by the Church of *England* to make a Clergyman. Many particular Persons think it necessary, and pretend to it, and call those no Clergymen that want it, when they may really want it themselves ; and yet they ground many Encroachments and Injuries to Mankind on those Claims. We affirm we have no such apostolical Clergy, the Church of *England* herself, neither affirms we have, nor thinks it essential : We assert the same.

A N D what she decrees in her Articles, that publick Authority is sufficient to make a Clergyman, or a lawful Minister, we also maintain and possess as amply as others.

A N D I would remark, that tho' a certain apostolical Mission cannot be assential, if it be not to be had, yet he that has publick Authority, and what is call'd episcopal Ordination, and adheres to the Doctrine and Worship of the apostolick Age, and the primitive Church, is nearer an apostolical Mission, than he that is not so qualify'd. This is my Pretension, and this a Reply to the present Consideration.

A N O T H E R is the Case of a bad Minister officiating, with the Consequence, whether God's Grace accompanies his Ministry, or whether the People be not in Fault, who joyn with him. This Objection has two Branches, whether the Effect of an evil Ministry be good, and who is an evil Minister.

T H E

THE Church of *England* in her Articles has answer'd the first Branch of this Objection; it is in the 26th Article, the Title is, of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the Effects of the Sacraments. It runs thus.

'ALTHO' in the visible Church the Evil 'be mingled with the Good, and sometime 'the Evil have chief Authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet, forasmuch as they do not the same in their own Name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his Commission and Authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, 'and in the Receiving of the Sacraments.'

'NEITHER is the Effect of Christ's Ordinance taken away by their Wickedness, nor 'the Grace of God's Gifts diminish'd from such 'as by Faith, and rightly do receive the Sacraments minister'd unto them, which be effectual, because of Christ's Institution and Promise, 'tho' they be minister'd by evil Men.'

THIS is the Decree of the Church of *England* in Regard to evil Ministers: She determines, that the divine Grace is not defeated by their Ministry, and in her Eye 'till they are depos'd by just Judgment, their Ministry is equally Valid with that of others: And therefore if they should be depos'd by unjust Judgment, that is, by an incompetent Authority, or an unfair Conviction, they are still Valid, and in her Opinion, not depos'd at all.

T H E R E F O R E

T H E R E F O R E, if God's Grace attends the Ministration of evil Men, the People cannot be in Fault by joyning with them; nay, they must either joyn with Ministers who have sometime been said to be evil Men, or else they must joyn with none at all: For what Minister has not been reported, on some Occasion, or other, in his whole Life, by some Persons, an evil Man? He may indeed be Good, tho' reported Evil; and he may be now Good, tho' at another Time esteem'd bad; but if no Man, that has ever been call'd wicked, is to be joyn'd with, it will give a very short Account of publick Devotion.

T H E World is apt to misconstrue what is Evil, Bad, or Wicked, and who is an evil Man, or Minister; Malice, Injustice and Calumny are as Evil as any Sins they are apt to accuse.

N O W one who has these Vices to answer for, let his Life and Character be never so faintlike, is criminal; for the Devil often transforms himself into an Angel of Light, and yet the Sins above mention'd are his peculiar Sins and Works; therefore it ought to be settled, who is a bad Minister, and who is his Accuser, whether he be not more corrupt, in greater Instances.

I F it be alleg'd, that according to the apostolical Constitutions, a bad Minister is none at all, but defeats the Grace of God; it is reply'd that no Man is said to be bad by those
Con-

Constitutions, 'till he is convicted, as such, by Men who have Authority to take Cognizance of Crimes against those Constitutions. Only apostolical Bishops ever had that Authority; and therefore it amounts to the same as the Article of the Church of *England*, that none can be by them depos'd, but by just Judgment, (which may be a Rarity) and in the mean Time, their Ministration is effectual.

N O R can that Church take Cognizance of any, but her own Ministers; it is not in her Power to depose others; others have their own Churches, an Immunity and a Power equal to herself, and Freedom from any other Jurisdiction. It is our invaluable Happiness, that we breathe in a free Country; we are not born Slaves, nor therefore should wear a Chain we do not inherit.

A N O T H E R Objection has been, that of *Arianism*; not founded on my Preaching, or Writings (which have never favour'd *Arianism*) but on a Misconstruction of some antient Doxologies and Creeds, the Use of which has been since explain'd to be occasion'd by their being Primitive very long before the Birth of *Arius*; and yet left free, and not impos'd. That Opinion has not had Cause to prevail, Proofs of which have been known in this Assembly.

D I S R E S P E C T to the Church of *England* has been, with some, another Imputation. But groundless, for we profess to joyn in her
Prin-

Principles, as far as they are primitive. If our Principles, or Reasonings, be in any Respects different, her Divines are at Liberty to confute them by superior Learning and Reason. But all the Weapons hitherto employ'd against us have been only those of Aspersions A N D V I O L E N C E, which are not of Weight enough with considerate Men, to deserve a Reply.

I T is surprizing that the Use of unleaven'd Bread in the Eucharist should by any be said to want original Evidence, when the Practice and Law of Christ is the best original Evidence. It has been debated indeed whether Christ eat the Passover at the same Time with the *Jews*, but at whatever Time the Passover was eaten, it was by the Law of *Moses* to be eaten only with unleaven'd Bread. *St. Paul* implies this in his Allusion to the Passover: And the Eucharist was Part of the Passover made by Christ a Christian Sacrament.

I T has been urg'd that we us'd in the former Edition of the Liturgy the *Jewish* Prayers in *Clement*, and such Expressions as only they who had been *Jews* did use; such as the God of *Abraham*, and the like.

B U T the Psalms are daily read, which are all *Jewish* Prayers, and full of the like Expressions: The Preface to the 10 Commandments is *Jewish*: In the Office for Matrimony in the Church of *England*, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* is invoc'd. They are our Fathers as well as the Fathers of the *Jews*; for to *Abraham* and

and the Patriarchs the Promise of Christ was made, and he is call'd the Father of the Faithful; *Matthew* bestows a whole Chapter to prove that Christ was the Son of *Abraham*, and we, as Heirs with Christ of the Covenant made with the Patriarchs, may properly address God, as the God of our Fathers who came out of *Egypt*. So that such Language is very natural and proper in itself, and common in the Christian Church; and as this is not fix'd to be necessarily us'd, so to use it on proper Occasions may not be disagreeable to the *Jewish* People, and may tend to influence their Conversion.

ON the same Ground it is, that we leave the Use of the common Creeds and Doxologies free, tho' we prefer and recommend the more Primitive; because we would deal with others as reasonable Creatures, and Fellow-Christians equal with our selves. But they, who call the modern Worship Antichristian, Heretical, Apostate and Idolatrous, have not our Plea; they cannot at all use the modern Worship, but against their Principle, especially, if, by calling on Authority in these Matters, they do expressly own they are under that Authority.

ON the Whole, we prefer to all others the primitive Canons, Worship and Model; but we do that consistently with the Rights of human Nature, the Privileges of our Fellow-Christians, and the Laws and Interests of our

Country. We allow no Force in Religion: nor that we are accountable for it to any but God: Our Design is the utmost Perfection of Reason, Virtue, Piety and Literature, with the most assiduous Labour; without Tyranny, Slavery, Brutality, or the Miseries that flow from them. Misrepresentation and Injustice, are all that have been employ'd against this Intention; and they really give us both Strength and Honour, by implying that no other Weapons can be employ'd.

THE Charge of Schism we answer by the same Arguments, which the Church of *England* uses to answer the same Charge of Schism from the Church of *Rome*, but that Accusation is the more unkind, as we intend to make the ORATORY a General Chapel of Ease to all the Churches in *London* and *Westminster*.

BEING qualify'd by the Act of Exemption is no Imputation on us, but would be rather an Insult on the Parliament, that pass'd that Act, and an equal Objection to the Church of *England*, which has qualify'd itself by the Act of Uniformity, only with this Difference, that the Toleration-Act was pass'd with the Consent of the Bishops of the Church of *England*, and the Act of Uniformity (it is said) was pass'd at first without the Consent of any Bishop at all: For then, it is reported, that the Popish Bishops either absented, or were disqualify'd to sit in the House, or could not, by their Religion, nor did vote for the Uniformity-

ty-Act, and not one Protestant Bishop was here in being.

T H E R E may be, as some imagine, another Difference ; the Toleration-Act may be thought more suitable to the Maxims of the Protestant Religion, and the Reformation, than the Act of Uniformity. For it is the Principle of Protestantism, that one Christian has no Dominion over the Conscience of another : And this was the Ground of the Toleration-Act ; but this Principle is not, by some, esteem'd to be so properly consulted in the Act of Uniformity, which establishes a Dominion of Men over the Consciences of others ; this was done before by the Church of *Rome* : She call'd in the secular Power to impose an Uniformity in Religion ; it is her Principle and her Practice ; but it may, perhaps, seem a surprizing Way of reforming from her, by the same Mens continuing her Principles and Practices (without her Pretensions) who profess, as Protestants, to oppose her Principles and Practices.

T H E Manner of supporting this Affair is by free voluntary Contribution : And there lie far more Exceptions against Church Revenues than against that Method.

B Y the Law of *England*, every Spot of Ground in this Island is a Point of civil Property, and belongs to some Proprietor, exclusive of others, since two Persons cannot have one and the same Right by Law to stand on

the same Ground ; that is a Contradiction in Terms, and no Law can reconcile it. There is not a Foot of Ground in this Place, that is not appropriated for the Use of the Congregation and Academy : And no person has a Right to stand on any Ground in any Assembly, religious, or civil, without the Consent of the Proprietor.

T H A T Consent is imply'd in the Statute, if such a one subsists, which requires all Men once a Month to go to some religious Assembly; that is, to obtain the Leave of the Proprietors for that Purpose. For it did not intend to break in upon the Property of that Assembly; and the Act of Exemption, made in Favour of religious Congregations, cannot be constru'd to their Prejudice. That Act does not enjoin even that the Doors shall be open (tho' all here are so except the Seat-Door, which a Man must be in the Chapel, before he can approach) nor that any Man whatever shall have a Right to enter, or behave as he pleases ; these are no Parts of that Statute, nor can any Construction of this Kind be built upon it. By the same Reason that any Man will stand upon, or possess a Foot of Ground, which a Proprietor has declar'd to be reserv'd for his S O C I E T Y, and which therefore is justly appropriated, he may, on the same Score, enter and possess an appropriated Seat, even by removing those who are placed in it, which is not right, nor therefore would be the other Pretension. W H A T.

W H A T E V E R contradicts the early Prejudices, the settled Interests, and sinister Views of Men, will naturally be oppos'd and blacken'd by all Artifices, in publick Papers, and in Conversation : But let any Man oppose, or object to our Plan ; there the Force of our Adversaries ought to be pointed ; the rest is Personal, and foreign to the Question. It should rather excite the Curiosity of all, who may be inclin'd to think hardly of us, from the Arts and Malice of others, to convince themselves at the O R A T O R Y fairly, whether we deserve the Obloquy. We profess there to treat justly of Subjects which others are ty'd up from discoursing justly upon, and to place them every Way in a more ready and advantageous Light, with a Variety ever new, and aim'd to be the most Perfect, as well as the most agreeably Useful. This is not the usual Respect paid to the World in other Auditories ; and this Truth and Perfection we so severely labour to attain, is a Plea to all Persons in our Favour.

T H A T the Freedom of reasoning upon and canvassing impartially all Subjects in this Institution may be of evil Consequence, and corrupt the Minds and Principles of the Hearers, is no just Allegation against it. For the freest Reasoning can be no Injury, but a Service, to the Interest of Truth ; and without it, Truth can never be found, nor promoted. But bringing Men to think rightly will always be reckon'd

reckon'd a Depraving of their Minds by those who are desirous to keep them in a Mistake, and who measure all Truth by the Standard of their own narrow Opinions, Views and Passions. This is properly corrupting the Mind, whereas impartial Reasoning gives it an exact Byass and makes it less obnoxious to Error and Imposition. The Principles of this Institution are those of right Reason, the first Ages of Christianity, true Facts, clear Criticism and polite Literature; if these corrupt the Mind, to find a Place, where the Mind will not be corrupted, will be impracticable. If any different Objections of Weight shall be advanc'd, they shall be occasionally clear'd: This is sufficient for our first *Apologie*; the Shield is unpierc'd; and the Principles of our Cause stand firmly on the Basis of Reason and Truth, Virtue and Religion.





A N I D E A O F

*What is intended to be taught in
the Week-Days universal Aca-
demy.*



TH E Advantages propos'd in this Undertaking are to provide a Remedy for the Inconveniencies, Defects and Difficulties complain'd of in other Methods, and to teach indifferently Persons of all Ranks, Ages, Conditions and Circumstances, either singly, or in Classes, in Proportion to their Genius and Application, by proper Masters, under my Inspection, what they desire to learn in all Parts of divine and human Knowledge

ledge, Languages, Arts and Sciences, in the most concise, just, elegant, agreeable, and perfect Manner. The Hours will be freely appointed; a certain Number of Lessons, Examinations and Exercises will be allotted to each Point; the Inequality of Sense and Memory will be answer'd by repeating them; the Conduct will be by a natural and regular Conversation, minuted, under an Engagement not to communicate, or divulge the Method of Teaching. This Scheme will bring Home to any Person all the Benefit of Schools, Universities, Tutors, Academies and Professors, with more than can be reap'd from them; not only to Gentlemen, and those who are train'd up to the Law, Physick, Divinity, and the like; but they who want Leisure, Opportunity, or Ability, to take other Methods, or are deterr'd from them, or for any Reasons unwilling to learn elsewhere what they would rival others in, or would know for their private Improvement and Satisfaction (as for Instance, if a Gentleman would understand Divinity, or a perfect Course of School, or University Learning; or if any other Person would have the like, in the most easy and compendious Institution) it will be readily afforded in this Platform. The Branches are to read, judge, compose and apply to practice, or to human Life.

1. To read and judge a *Latin*, or *Greek* Author.

2. To read the *Hebrew* Bible.

3. To

3. To read the *Rabbinical* and *Talmudical Hebrew*, and the common Hands of the *Spanish, Italian* and *German Jews*.

4. To know the *Jewish* Religion, History, Correspondence, Politicks and Measures from all Antiquity to this Day.

5. The same in any different Religion, for the Instruction of Persons professing each Religion, or of others.

6. To read and judge an Author in any eastern, northern, or southern Tongue besides those mention'd, as *Arabic, Armenian, Persian, Saxon*, high and low *Dutch, English*; all the northern Dialects, *French, Italian, Spanish, &c.*

7. To read and judge of Manuscripts, Court Instruments and Records in all Languages.

8. The Arts of short Hand, Cyphering and De-Cyphering.

9. To write and speak elegant *Latin, English, &c.* and to master any Part of the *Belles Lettres*.

10. To make a Theme, which is the Foundation of all beautiful Prose-Discourses.

11. To judge of any Compositions, Works, Books, Writings, &c.

12. To judge, and compose in Poetry of all Kinds, according to the Light and Force of the Person's Genius.

13. To think rightly, and speak readily on any given Subject.

14. To invent and plan happily a Subject, and compose well an Oration, Lecture, Ser-

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mon,

mon, Declamation, Differtation, Epistle, Dialogue, Thesis : Or any Work in Prose, in the serious Vein, or in that of Ridicule, Humour, Wit and Fancy

15. To get off, and speak well, any Work for the Publick.

16. To know the Globe, Astronomy, Astrology, Geography, Navigation, the projecting of Maps and Charts for Land and Sea, &c.

17. Natural History, General and Particular.

18. All the Parts of the Mathematicks, Simple and Practicall.

19. A Course of true University-Learning, experimental Philosophy, *Materia Medica*, the Principles and Practice of Physick, Anatomy, Botany, secret Chymistry, &c.

20. Law of Nature, Nations, Civil, Canon, Common, Statute, in Theory and Practice ; Style and Practice of each Court ; Art of Pleading, knowing the Difficulties of the Law, and executing the Profession.

21. The Number, Schemes, Interest, Strength and Measures of Parties, Nations, Courts, Bodies of Men, Ballance of Power, Trade, &c.

22. To teach those that desire it, what Religion is in Fact, and what it is in Truth ; the Faculty of Praying, Preaching, Disputing, Conferring, Resolving Cases of Conscience, Catechising, Visiting the Sick, preparing for the Sacrament, Understanding the Bible and Christi-

Christianity; Knowing the Right and Wrong of any religious Profession, and all the controversial Parts of it.

23. Practical Life, in all Circumstances: Rhetorick, addressing the Passions; negotiating, excelling any Person in his own Way; improving and perfecting the Arts and Sciences; conversing, disputing, and managing a Controversy, imitating and surpassing an Author, knowing the Secret and Ultimatum of Persons and Societies, and the Craft of Professions; and to be form'd for any Part, or Function of Life.

24. Knowledge of Books, and Disposition of Libraries.

T H I S is the Platform of the Institution design'd; some Heads may be omitted, but what may be hereafter added, will be found reducible to some of these Chapters. The Thing is left to speak for itself, the Execution, it is hop'd, may justify the Scheme.

To remove all Prejudice on the Score of Religion, no Person will have any Suggestions given him on that Head, which he himself, or those entrusted with the Care of him, shall not distinctly and expressly desire, and no farther.

J. H.



PLA R
OF THE
ORDR, 1726.



THIS is an ecclesiastical institution; but, since the holy Bible and theology cannot be understood without the other arts and sciences, it will also take in, on a religious footing, an academy of the sciences and languages: the whole design being calculated to the utmost elegance and perfection, of any in the kind, that have appear'd.

The fundamental authority of it as a Church, will be the same (to speak no higher at present) with that of all the modern Churches, i. e. a legal liberty of private judgment in religion; this is the very principle of the reformation, the basis of all the

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protestant interest, and is thought the most valuable branch of the freedom of our constitution.

It is no party-affair; it is intended to be a peculiar lasting honour, entertainment, and interest to our country; and the attendance, assistance, conduct, and succession of it, are undertaken to be regulated by the application and provision of the institutors.

I. As a CHURCH.

Its principles are, 1. In belief, a liberty of conscience from all secular restraints. 2. In morality, the religion of nature, of which revelation, in this respect, is only declarative. 3. In historical, or reveal'd religion, that of the primitive church, in the first ages. Its view is, impartially to examine the pleas of all religions, proposing that as the truest Standard and Center of Union.

Its Service is, 1. In the model, primitive. 2. In the language, entirely scriptural. But sometimes the primitive Liturgies shall be perform'd. Persons, who have been eminent in, or great patrons of arts and literature, if they have been virtuous, or penitents, shall be commemorated.

The religious instruction. 1. In the sermons, shall be perform'd with the most exact composition, speaking, and action. 2. Both in the sermons and lectures, shall take in the whole circle of divinity, regularly, faithfully, clearly, and elegantly represented. In the morning, a sermon will be deliver'd; in the evening, a lecture will be read: the former

mer on some part of practical theology, the latter, on the critical, historical, speculative, or literary parts of it.

II. As an Academy of the sciences and languages, on the bottom above-mentioned.

Its general design is, 1. To supply the want of an university, or universal school in this capital, for the equal benefit of persons of all ranks, professions, circumstances, and capacities: to rectify the defects, remove the pedantry and prejudices, and improve on the advantages of all the usual methods of education, and institution, common, scholastic, or academical; domestic or foreign: to give the readiest institute to the three learned faculties, and the service of church and state, as well as all useful and polite functions: to celebrate all scholastic and academical exercises, orations, declamations, disputations, conferences: communication of letters of correspondence with great men, and learned bodies; as also of observations, discoveries, improvements, and experiments: courses, and prizes in the arts and sciences, for knowledge, business or accomplishment; and meetings of the most eminent persons in all liberal professions and faculties: to lay a scheme for the best encouragement of men of merit, parts, and learning, to form an amicable society on the most polite principles; and promote the justest turn of free impartial thinking on all occasions, in order to retrieve and exalt the genius of Britain.

In particular, it is more especially design'd, 2. To lay a foundation for the long desired English Academy; to give, by just degrees, a standard to the English tongue: to clear, regulate, ascertain, and digest the English history: to revive an antient Athenian and Roman school of philosophy, rhetoric, and elocution; which last is reckon'd among the Artes perditae: and to afford the best and readiest lights on all curious or occasional topicks.

For this end, at first, once a week, there will be a reading on some learned or polite subject, form'd on the most natural deduction, to compleat a course of human knowledge, in the most just and regular method, &c.





L A W S

O F T H E

Conferences of the ORATOR.

1. **T**H E only design of a conference, is to search the truth of one single proposition, by a mutual free communication of sentiments in an amicable manner, as far as the church and state have thought fit to allow the search of truth.

2. The difference between a conference and a disputation is, that in the latter, only two are engag'd, and a moderator; in the former, more, still with a moderator, who shall always be the founder of this institution, or one appointed by him, or with his consent.

3. Whatever is said shall be reduc'd to a self-evident proposition, as near as possible.

4. Every proposition, proof, query, opinion, quotation, reference, shall be written down by the moderator in his journal.

5. *It*

5. It shall not be essential to clear or settle, or ultimately to answer any point at the time when it is first propos'd; but an agreed time shall be minuted down for the clearing of it, either fully, or in a certain degree, proportion'd to the nature of the difficulty.

6. No digression from the point propos'd, no personal reflexion, no calumny, nothing indirect, captious, unfair, insidious, or ensnaring; nothing that is prejudic'd or passionate, ill-bred, malicious, sophistical, or equivocating; no jests, puns, turns of wit, drollery, ridicule; nothing but what belongs strictly to the point, shall be allow'd or answer'd.

7. As only the person that speaks knows what ideas he annexes to his own words, so he shall explain his own terms.

8. Every man's explanation of his terms shall be minuted; and the determinate meaning of each word be stated and agreed, before any proposition shall be the subject of a conference.

9. The number of those who confer shall not exceed twelve; nor the necessary time of each conference be above an hour.

10. The business of the Moderator shall be to see, that the proposition be stated, the precise meaning of each word clear'd, to call for, and minute down, the opinions, queries, reasonings, &c. of those who confer: recapitulate the force or sum of the arguments alleg'd, execute the laws of the conference: and if requir'd, to be also a member of each conference, assisting at it, with the rest.

11. The subject of the sermon, lecture, or discourse of the Orator shall be, or yield the subject

subject of the conference, as a thesis to it; which must be heard by those who confer.

12. Persons of all religions and opinions shall be at liberty to maintain their own, or oppose others, with a salvo to the laws of the kingdom.

13. All propositions shall be clear'd in the most natural, distinct, regular, and mathematical method, by an orderly series of self-evident truths, according to the nature of each subject.

14. If any person proposes a particular subject, a proper time shall be agreed and minuted to confer upon it.

15. A mistake, an oversight, a forgetfulness, or bringing inferior reasons, shall be no disgrace; but to maintain a point, when those reasons are shewn to be inferior, shall be infamous.

16. He that is guilty of ill behaviour shall be obnoxious to the proprietors of the Oratory, as a disturber of his assembly.

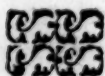
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Specimen of a Conference.

1. Proposition given out at the table, where only those who confer are to sit.
2. The terms stated, and explain'd.
3. The connexion of them investigat'd close, ly and mathematically.
4. Opinions of each propos'd on each step of the investigation.
5. Debates and discourses on those opinions, when requisite; short and to the point.
6. Queries, doubts, difficulties, objections, propos'd, stated, argu'd, resolv'd, or minut'd for farther resolution: No contention for victory, decision, or malice, but truth only.
7. What is as self-evident as the thing will allow, put down as concluded, and demonstrated; and its truth found.
8. What is not so, put down for farther investigation.
9. No man's mere authority taken for a reason, in it self, any farther than there is a just reason to support it.
10. These articles to be read before the conference.





*The Laws of the Disputations
of the Oratory, form'd on those
of the Conferences.*



1. **T**HERE are two Methods of disputing, the *Socratick*, in Dialogue; and the *Logical*, by Syllogisms.

2. The Disputants may agree on either Method, or mingle both.

3. In the *Socratick* Way, a Syllogism, Categorical, Disjunctive, or Hypothetical, may be demanded, to prevent irregular Conclusions.

4. In both, the Question shall always be fix'd, put down in Writing, and the Terms stated, explain'd, and answer'd, and that Explanation written down, for the Standard of the Dispute.

5. The Question shall be a single Controversial Proposition.

6. As the most learned, or technical Language, without Reason, is mere sound, and foreign to any Question whatever; and as he only, who uses such Language can really and ultimately know what particular Ideas he annexes to his own particular Words, so each Disputant, in these Cases, shall always, and immediately explain his own Terms; otherwise the Question itself will be lost, and the only Question will be who can best puzzle and confound both that and the Auditory; which will defeat the End of the Disputation.

7. Every Auditor shall be well behav'd: None shall any way tamper, or interfere with the Dispute, on Pain of Breach of good Behaviour, forfeiting his Place, and suspending the Dispute.

8. No Disputant shall use Expressions foreign to the Question, to shew his own Wit, Malice, or Passions; not himself, or any personal Words, being the Point in View, but the Truth of the Question only. The Respondent is not bound to prove his Question, but to deny the Opponent's Arguments against it; the Opponent, as such, undertaking the Burden of Proof against his Question. The Respondent may repeat the Stress of the Opponent's Argument, and then form his Answer. He denies the first, or second Proposition, or the Consequence, or the Disjunction; and the End of all Dispute, is when a Thing is brought to a plain self-evident Contradiction in Terms, in one Proposition, prov'd by a Categorical Syllogism. An Argument, or a Denial, may be enforc'd, or illustrated. Every Idea, Word, Proposition, or Argument, ought to be made as determinate,

determinate, distinct, and self-evident, as possible.

9. The Moderator is to execute the Laws of the Disputation, but not to be a Disputant, or final Judge. He is to call for, THE TIME. THE QUESTION. SENSE. ORDER: If the Time of dwelling on an Argument (which is to be about 5 Minutes, unless more be agreed on) be exceeded: If any Words be us'd, not to the Question; or if more remote, or technical Language be not immediately explain'd. And if the Disputants, or Auditors, misbehave: And all shall assist, or not hinder him, in executing these Laws, which are so essential, that he who breaks them breaks the Disputation.

10. The Scheme of the Whole is,

I. The Question, or Questions.

II. The Respondent's Thesis.

III. The Question repeated by the Opponent.

IV. The Opponent's Arguments, } And Illustrations, or
Respondent's Answer, } Enforcements, on
One Question, or in
Part.

V. The Moderator's Review, if he pleases.

VI. The Opponent's Thesis.

VII. The other Question repeated by the Opponent, if there be another, &c. VIII. The

VIII. The other Course
of Arguments,
Answers, } &c.

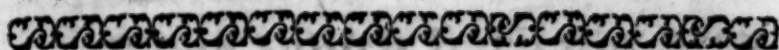
IX. The Moderator's Review, if he pleases.

X. The Respondent's conclusive Address to
the Moderator, the Opponent, and the Auditors:

N. B. For the rest, the Laws of the Con-
ferences are to be observ'd:

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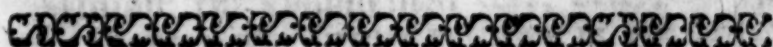
FIRST SERMON

Preach'd at the

Opening of the ORATORY,

On Sunday, July 3. 1726.

On the Design, and Reasons, of
the Institution.



VIII. Other Considerations
of Argument,
Answers,

IX. The Moderator's Review, if he please

X. The Respondents' consecutive Addresses
the Moderator, the Opponent, and the Auditor

XI. The Laws of the Court
and the Rules of the Society

APPENDIX

Printed at the

Printing Office of the Society

at the



to the Secretary of the Society

Printed by the Society



ISA. lii. 15.

== That which hath not been told them, shall they see, and that which they have not heard, shall they consider.

Religion and knowledge, tho' both lay a claim to the highest antiquity, and are coeval with the first rise of mankind; tho' they should be inseparable companions, and mutual supports to each other; yet the course of human affairs has been so dispos'd, that observations may arise in either, which may carry a face of novelty; like the famous river, which loses its hidden tide beneath the surface of the earth, and then re-appears; still really the same, tho', to the eye, another current.

This is the scope of the holy prophet in the place alledg'd, and this will give a sanction to the design of our present assembly.

Isaiah, the evangelical seer, describes in this chapter, the future religion of the Messiah, as an event that would appear very singular and astonishing.

He commands the captive daughter of Sion to awake, put on her strength, and loose her self from the hands of her neck, for they shall know in that day it is God that speaks, behold! it is he.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of peace and salvation! That which hath not been told them, shall they see, and that which they have not heard, they shall consider.

Here the Declaration of the Gospel it self is term'd new, unheard before, which removes all prejudice, rais'd merely on that bottom.

The Connexion between this account, and our immediate subject, will, at the first glance, be manifest.

To retrieve the morning lustre of gospel-truth, and dispel the shadows of modern error, is the aim of one branch of the institution we now celebrate, as a more perfect establishment in favour of universal knowledge, than has occur'd either in this, or any nation, is the other part of it.

These, tho' in themselves as antient as the understanding of men, and the being of christianity, yet represented, and apply'd in the view now intended, are, in a great degree, to us new, and in a public light, unconsider'd.

But then, originally, the use of letters, and the dispensation of our christian covenant, were new; the sacred volumes of our faith are call'd expressly the new testament: so that it is not the seeming particularity, but the truth and justness of an undertaking, that is, in all respects, to be regarded.

This is not offer'd, as an apology for our design: was that necessary, it would be unavailing.

If the natural weight and importance of the affair does not create its own reception, it must, it ought to fall. All that is now propos'd,

propos'd, is to shew, that we are countenanc'd by no less abettors than Isaiah, and our blessed Lord himself, to engage your attention, and overthrow all prejudice.

Various, strong are the reasons of our purposes. Abuses have multiply'd in understanding, and religion.

On the one hand, a declension, an apostasy, from our most holy faith, is become too general: On the other, the path of knowledge and literature has been much perverted.

To recover a just zeal for the former, we appeal to the ancient founders of our christian profession, as the ablest, the truest judges.

To repair the inconveniencies of the latter, we have concerted an enterprize, in which the several defects shall be amended, and perfection, as near as possible, attain'd.

The design is, in it self, of weight: however it be executed, it has a right to the approbation of the judicious, and the candid.

On that footing, we shall advance with resolution, and chearfully take your present encouragement, as an auspicious omen of success and victory.

The detail of our subject will extend it self most properly, under the following Articles.

I. We are to exhibit an idea of the nature and conduct of our scheme.

II. Submit the pleas and motives, from which we would presume on your concurrence in it.

I. An account of the nature, and intended management of our undertaking will be expected.

The entire foundation of it is ecclesiastical, of a religious tendency.

But since the light and aid of human erudition, of the arts, the sciences, and the tongues, are requisite to explain the holy scriptures, and master the body of theology, it will, on that score, include an academy of literature.

In both articles, it is modell'd to answer the intention in a more compleat manner, than has been hitherto offer'd to the consideration of an age, too refin'd and inquisitive, to be longer impos'd upon by false pretences, either in human or divine learning.

On this authority, our universities, (which, as far as they are learned bodies, consisting of good masters and scholars, and not monastic, or useless foundations, we profoundly honour, and to whom we would be subservient in the academical branch of our scheme) will find no cause to complain of us.

For, as I am publickly * commission'd to be a teacher of religion, and the academy is

* All local right of exercising sacred functions is from the crown. So that the right of the Diacony is equal to any episcopal authority in this realm: All the local exercise, as well as the original right, of that authority here, being entirely and only from the crown; our clergy are laymen, for W. B. the first, was no bishop, and therefore could not make a clergyman.

erected to serve us in that character, by calling in the assistance of learning to make our very bibles familiar to the meanest capacity, I am also commission'd to be a teacher of human learning, as far as it is essential to make the divine intelligible.

It is to be observ'd, that their charters are not patents of monopoly, to engross the communication of knowledge.

And the number of academies, allow'd in this capital, tho' not founded on a power of religious instruction, are proofs, they are not injur'd by our pretension, as we could largely demonstrate, they are really serv'd by it.

Doz will the modern churches be entitled to load us with any pressing objection. With them we are ready to communicate, as far as we are capable, and to their judgment we shall pay all proper deference.

But we think, we are privileg'd to take the same liberty of varying from them, which they take of differing from one another, and sometimes from themselves.

Our right of exercising our private judgment is equal. We assert an equal freedom of conscience, accountable to God only; since no human judicature can take a cognisance of the soul.

The whole reformation turns on this principle. The protestant interest must sink, if it be deny'd: and the civil constitution of our native Britannia, the seat of true heroic fortitude, the parent of free-born spirits, will be subverted, if she suffers the minds of her sons to be fetter'd; or the glorious spring,
and

and indur'd taste of just liberty, to be tramp'd or baffled.

The particular system, which we profess as a Church, and which diversifies us from other communions, is that of the primitive church in the first 500 years after Christ, being the ages of the four first general councils.

In that time we use this distinction; if a contradiction be demonstrated between the current sense of any two periods of it, we adhere to the more ancient, if other considerations be equal.

If an opposition should be prov'd between the voice of the primitive church, in that whole compass of time, and that of the scripture, we shou'd disregard that primitive consent, and espouse, as in duty bound, the word of God.

Indeed we believe there is no such opposition, as this last mention'd; on the contrary, we are firmly persuaded, that in all cases, where the new testament is doubtful, or obscure, the concurrent evidence of the first ages should determine the doubt, and clear the obscurity.

To specify every point at present, in which the modern churches deviate from the primitive, would be an immense task, and perhaps, at once, not very agreeable.

It is sufficient to lay it down as a certain principle, that, where-ever a modern church takes the boldness to vary from that of her wiser forefathers, in the time above limited, and which I would be ever constru'd to intend, the balance ought to be cast on the side of the primitive, as in all respects qualify'd

to be a more competent judge of the question.

To an attentive Eye, curious to search the merits of this argument, a growing number of modern deviations from the elder principles would rise up: as to our very bibles, the code of scripture, the rule of faith: the instituted matter, essence, and form of the sacrament; the subordination of particular synods to general councils, in point of authority: the nullity of the English orders, (and the entire dependence of the church upon the state, in consequence of that nullity, overthrowing what some argu'd about the distinct and indelible character, in a late famous case, before the house of lords) by comparing the clause, by which only Matthew Parker was consecrated, with the express consecrations of antiquity, which only can be true episcopal commissions; the coercive power of the church, unknown to the first ages, over the bodies, lives, and fortunes of men; the admitting those to baptism, who never were catechumens, making baptism essential, without an apostolical mission; the making human decisions, creeds, constitutions, &c. articles of faith, and as necessary parts of religion, as revelations from God; the corruptions, and ill consequences, flowing from fix'd possessions, annex'd only to certain uncertain schemes of religion, and calling those corruptions, possessions, and schemes, all together, the church, &c. These will yield sufficient matter at present to ruminate upon; and the rest I refer to my articles, and future representations. This, in the scripture-phrase, might be thought a brand pluck'd out of the fire; but another scrip-

scripture commands, that truth and peace must attend upon each other.

Our drift would be, in the most calm, and rational manner, to revive a due veneration for those good old days, exalt the genius of the primitive ages, and make them the standard of our religion, as they ought to have been, of the reformation.

And it is a justice we owe the hopes we would form in you, to declare the present advances we are induc'd to make towards an end so very righteous, so extremely desirable.

The execution of this plan must divide it self into two branches, the liturgy, and the work of preaching.

The first step we have taken in the liturgy, in compliance with the reigning prepossessions arising from a popular custom, is, to follow the usual method, but to give a primitive turn to the matter, and the language, by drawing both from the scripture and antiquity, avoiding that repetition, and prolixity, which create so general a complaint.

For it is our persuasion, that every act of worship is more agreeable to the will of God, the more it is conformable to his word, and the apostolical platform.

But we do not impose a written liturgy, as in it self necessary, nor are we confin'd to one liturgy. Any form within our limited time is proper to be employ'd by us.

But among all the sacred offices then us'd, we regard those of the constitutions of Clement, as the most authentic; and we deem them to be, in substance, if not in words, convey'd by apostolical tradition,
from

from the same evidence, on which we receive the new testament; notwithstanding the charge of spuriousness, which some have so lavishly thrown on the most valuable memoirs of original christianity.

In the function of the word, our view is, to recover the spirit of the ancient preachers, and assert the honour of the English pulpit: to institute a regular, compleat course of divinity, in all its branches, critical, historical, speculative, moral; to banish for ever from this island, the Gothic manner, the mere still life, the lethargy of preaching, which reverses the miracle of our Lord, changes the wine into water, and leaves that congeal'd, for want of motion.

The composition of our sermons we shall endeavour to polish, and to animate their public delivery.

But in our lectures, which may turn chiefly on some learned and curious point of information, we shall pursue a more familiar free turn of style, and exhibit them in reading. Since the incidental mixtures of quotation, numbers, and the like, may render it improper, if not impracticable, to speak them.

The whole theological scheme, presented in this channel, as it is entirely new, so it will be labour'd to a degree, superiour to all present or past attempts of the kind.

We shall try to penetrate and unfold its most hidden recesses to the meanest capacity, rescue it from imposture and fallacy, give you the whole impartial truth of it, and do the justice due to all other religions, to examine their several pleas and pretensions in
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their

their full force, and without the least prejudice in favour of our own; form the right balance of the most equal and disinterested comparison, without bigotry to any one system, or servile attachment to any postulata whatsoever.

Pass we now to our academical undertaking, the subserviency of which to religion will justify the immediate display we think our selves oblig'd to give of it.

Its design is no less than that of an universal school of science and letters, in theory and practice, for instruction, exercise, and accomplishment, in all the parts of them.

The want of an university in this capital, has been often deplo'd.

Europe is the general seat of politeness, and this is the only Metropolis, which is destitute of an university.

Its advantage would outweigh every objection: it would be improv'd by the opportunities of converse and intercourse, the residence of the court, which is, or ought to be the supreme standard of elegance, the variety of tastes, pursuits, characters, professions, and a thousand other enlargements.

The defects, the narrowness of our usual education might here expect a more probable cure.

Licentiousness of manners might here be check'd by the same restraint, and put under as wholesome discipline, as we experience it elsewhere.

Nor could it be thought an injury to others, unless they be look'd upon as privileg'd marts of learning, exclusive of other places,

for

for the distribution of it, which would be a common injury to all mankind.

They are bodies corporate, vested by the crown with certain immunities; to invade their rights, and to exercise their jurisdiction, to confer their legal qualifications, would be an unnatural offer; but to discharge the office of a preceptor in the sciences they ought to teach, is no encroachment on their tenure. It is rather an enforcement to their main concern, and an addition to their glory.

But it is our aim to redress the complaints of misconduct in their institution, as well as to supply, in some measure, the absence of an university, in this great city.

Some exceptions have been taken on this head, which demand a remedy, and should therefore be excus'd in the mention. Bigotry to a set of notions, a confin'd way of thinking, a negligence of some of the most useful and polite arts; a management by interest, and party, more than an encouragement of genius and industry; a forbidding loftiness and austerity in the ruling part, which tends rather to lessen the relish of virtue, and discipline, than to promote it, and an enslaving of youth to subscriptions, tests, and forms, which they neither understand, nor believe, nor approve; these, and other complaints, with the train of ill consequences flowing from each of them, we would employ our humble endeavours, with the utmost submission, to rectify.

But our intention is still more extensive; to diffuse a taste of literature and just thinking among persons of all ranks and capacities, without the profusion of time and expence,

pence, which must attend a more formal application.

That all indifferently may be furnish'd with a ready key to judge rightly, advance properly, and if they have a call to it, master compleatly any division of knowledge, in a more advantageous manner, than the methods hitherto establish'd, have been calculated to satisfy.

Whatever shall appear to be deficient in education for the service of the church or state, to adorn the learned, useful, or elegant faculties of upper or common life, in the sphere of the court, in the law of nations, civil or municipal, in medicine, and all the arts dependent upon them, whatever is defective in the training to their acquirement, our design is contriv'd to repair, and facilitate.

This end we propose to attain by practice, as well as information; declaiming shall be improv'd to speaking, and dispute to conference.

The converse and correspondence of the most eminent in all liberal professions shall supply the imperfection of our own narrow sight.

The observations and improvements of the antient times shall be reviv'd.

The discoveries and experiments of the moderns shall be illustrated.

A regular course and praxis, in the several arts, shall be instituted.

The most prudent measures for the encouragement of merit shall be pursu'd.

An amicable league of society shall be form'd on the soundest principles.

And

And truth and virtue, uniformly and vigorously promoted, to cultivate the genius of our island.

That awakening word raises me farther, to inform you, that we shall consult its particular interest, in the strongest tenor of our endeavours.

Full oft, has an English academy been delineated; long has it been desir'd; here the actual foundation of it shall be attempted.

And what has requir'd the spirit of a distinguishing monarch; and a whole realm to commence abroad, shall here, on the single impulse of a private mind, be push'd into being at least, and with the divine blessing, and the smile of our superiors, executed.

We confide in the native harmony of human souls; we trust, that if the heart of one, however undeserving, beats high to a laudable enterprize, the rest will second it, and operate with an equal movement.

Nor shall our noble language, nor shall our history, be overlook'd.

The former, like our arms, ought to bear the laurel from France, which it merits, as well as from ancient Greece and Rome, in delicacy, in force, in majesty, in beauty.

The latter is entitled to our peculiar care, to untabel, to ascertain, to digest it.

Let us here emulate, in the name of all the genii of our country, the efforts of a neighbouring nation, that of Portugal.

Her Monarch, and people conspire to illustrate her story, and he, in the first place, most truly masters of their own home,

Let

Let not our Britannia in that yield the palm to her, who is her inferior in every other instance of glory.

But we shall not confine our selves to the beaten path in our disquisitions: if a topic rises to our view, that is uncommon or occasional, we shall readily exhibit it. Nothing shall be excluded, that tends to improve, or give a rational delight to the understanding.

Above all, what shall most strongly engage our attention, shall be the beautiful, and long neglected science of rhetoric and elocution.

The word of God should be the labour of life, but inaction is an image of death. Surely, some artful politician, a foe to the energy of preaching, introduc'd it.

Unhappy we, whom neither our schools, nor universities teach to speak, to look, to move, or even to read properly!

To action all the renown of the ancient Orators was owing. This was the great secret, the wonder, the charm of the famous old eloquence.

It was this that shook the Areopagus, the Forum, the Capitol: It was with this, O Demosthenes and Tully, that ye lighten'd and gave your thunder.

Here all the beauties of music and painting are united. Nature is its rule, and art its accomplishment.

All the rhetoricians have ever recommended it, and all just speakers have ever practis'd it.

No man ever cavill'd at action, but he us'd it, tho' perhaps awkwardly, while he rail'd against it.

Do?

For can any be a foe to it, who is a friend to common sense, and a judge of truth and nature.

In this spacious field of universal knowledge shall be the range of the Orator: and as we shall celebrate the memory of persons eminent for religion, we shall not overlook such characters, as have excell'd in genius and erudition, or have been patrons of them.

To them also we will consecrate a day in our calendar, and pay a grateful homage to their venerable ashes, by all the decent marks of a respectful commemoration.

Permit me now, after this sketch of our main purpose, which compos'd the first article, to submit in the

Id. The pleas and motives, from which we would humbly presume on your concurrence with it.

Tho' we might here enlarge with the better confidence, since, having gone thro' the detail of our design, the number, weight, and importance of the several heads, might in themselves bespeak your cando; yet, for that very reason, we shall be concise upon it, leaving the mention of them to include the motives, and press their native force on the judgment of this audience.

Numerous as they be, difficult as they may appear, if we engage your approbation of a scheme, which is contrib'd to be a lasting honour, interest, and entertainment to our country, the difficulty will be only an incentive to our industry, and like the palm we aim at, we shall rise against the pressure.

For

Do: shall we despair, while so many institutions are on foot, that are useless, or incumbrances, that one at least will be allow'd, let me say, indulg'd, which is intrinsically valuable, which is solidly beneficial to the public, to every rank of mankind.

There is, indeed, one singularity in our scheme, which we hope will be pardon'd, we must be diligent to merit your favour, before we can lay a claim to it.

It must be sustain'd by care, and recommended by assiduity.

It cannot be finish'd at once, like a turn of interest, by the fashionable arts of managing the humours and crises of the great, of sacrificing your souls, and putting your necks beneath the feet of the mighty.

No! we must study to deserve well, before we can expect it. Attention, and vigilance, are our avenue to success; and like the dawnings of antient Rome, many a conquest must be achiev'd before a triumph.

May the omen prosper, and yield, at length, a fortunate resemblance!

In short, to be primitive, is the beauty of religion; to be just, elegant, extensive, is the crown of knowledge.

This only is our plan.

To free the mind from darkness and fetters, that more than Egyptian bondage, the slavery of the understanding.

To oppose a tyranny over the body, is the natural bent of an English spirit; and shall the free born soul, the immortal part, be a vassal.

Alert your selves, my fellow christians: In learning and religion, see with your own eyes,

eyes, think with your own judgments: What is more beautiful than truth? What is dearer than liberty?

On this Basis, let our structure rise; if there be any lustre in the same, the honour of our native country; any allurements in surpassing former or present times; if there be any thing advantageous or pleasing in universal knowledge; any thing great or awful in the primitive church; let all conspire to recommend our attempt. Suffer me once to congratulate with you the first rise of a design, which contributes to all of them.

In this affair, we appeal from ignorance to politeness, from modern delusion to ancient christianity, from the adversaries of learning, to you, whom we would make the patrons and protectors of it.

Let the dignity, the worth of the undertaking be some atonement for the imperfections of those, who embark in it. Let the design engage your judgment, and let the execution of it be the object of your humanity.

R. B. If there be any Proposition in these, or any of my writings or discourses, repugnant to any law in this kingdom, it is so far acknowledg'd to be false, since a thing may be false in law, and yet may be true in divinity, fact, or argument: or, in other words, a Proposition may be judicially false, and yet really true.